

REMARKS

Kindly cancel claim 21 and amend claim 16 to depend from claim 1 and amend claim 1 to include further limitations and clarification as set forth on the attached sheets of claims. After entry of the amendment Claims 1-2 and 8-20 are pending in this application.

The Examiner has raised §112 rejections on Claims 1-2, 8-10, 13 and 16.

These claims have been amended to address the rejection set forth by the Examiner and more specifically to define the hub structures called for by the claims and to render consistent the membrane terminology. Multiple embodiments of the invention are seen in the drawings and the specification describes the necked down portions variously as "support ring 654" or neck portion 674 or "cooperating threaded portions 952 and 948". The claims have been amended to fairly and distinctly describe the invention sought to be covered by the amended claims.

The Examiner has rejected all the pending claims as anticipated by Cottenneau et al. '612 and or the Lesh '144 patent. The Examiner has also rejected pending claims as obvious in view of Cottenneau et al. '612 and the Lesh '144 patent

Directing the Examiner's attention to Fig. 97 of the present application, the claims are directed to the embodiment shown within that figure. Reference terminology added to the claim by the amendment is drawn from this embodiment and closely related embodiments. The claim has been amended to capture the overall geometry and functionality of the embodiment shown in Fig. 97 wherein three hubs, a proximal, medial and distal hub cooperate with struts or limbs to form bulging structures at locations 993 and 994.

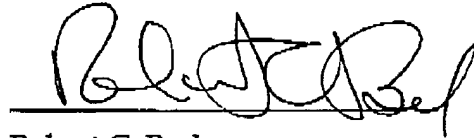
By way of argument, this three hub, two lobe geometry is not found within either of the two references and for this reason Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reexamine the amended claim noting in particular that the hub limitations now clarified in the amended claims are not met by either Lesh or Cottenneau.

CONCLUSION

All of the claims remaining in this application should now be seen to be in condition for allowance. The prompt issuance of a notice to that effect is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
ATRITECH, INC.
By its attorneys:

Date:

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Robert C. Beck
Registration No. 28,184
Beck & Tysver, P.L.L.C.
2900 Thomas Ave., #100
Minneapolis, MN 55416
Telephone: (612) 915-9635
Fax: (612) 915-9637